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CIA IS HAILED BY PRESIDENT

'Best in The World,' He Says On Anniversary

Washington, Sept. 19 (AP)—To President Johnson, the Central Intelligence Agency is a strong and vital professional intelligence service—"the best in the world."

He said so in a letter the CIA released today in connection with its twentieth anniversary.

"Twenty years ago," the President wrote, "you began with a vague assortment of functions and a varied assortment of people. Your purposes were not well understood inside the Government, and barely understood at all outside. Since that time you have become a dedicated and disciplined corps of professionals, with clearly defined responsibilities.

"Those responsibilities are vast and demanding. You give us information on which decisions affecting the course of history are made. Your product must be as perfect as is humanly possible—though the material you must work with is far from perfect . . .

Dedicated To Truth

"You have built a solid foundation in these past twenty years. America relies on your constant dedication to the truth—on your commitment to our democratic ideal. I believe our trust is well placed."

Vice President Humphrey spoke at a ceremony in which awards were given for long service in the CIA.

Mr. Humphrey praised the agency for professional competence.

"You've had some failures," he said, "Who hasn't? . . . I think your score is pretty good."

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